

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
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FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8384
AMVONSUL ADANA 1360
AMVONSUL IZMIR 1672

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISTANBUL 4812

E. O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: EINV, TU
SUBJ: GOT REFUSAL OF WORK PERMITS FOR U.S. INVESTORS

REF: (A) ANKARA 4398; (B) ISTANBUL 4734 (NOTAL)

1. IN ADDITION TO PROBLEMS FACED BY AMERICAN INVESTORS RAISED BY AMBASSADOR WITH FOREIGN MINISTER LAST JUNE, AN OLD PROBLEM, WHICH HAD BEEN DORMANT FOR PAST SEVERAL YEARS, HAS AGAIN SURFACED. THIS IS REFUSAL OF WORK PERMITS FOR FOREIGN NATIONAL (REPORTED REF B). AT OUR SUGGESTION, MANAGING DIRECTORS OF UNIROYAL, GOODYEAR, AND THE TWO GENERAL ELECTRIC INVESTMENTS IN TURKEY WHO, AS FAR AS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE ARE ONLY U.S. FIRMS THAT CURRENTLY HAVE PROBLEMS WITH WORK PERMITS, MET AT CONGEN DECEMBER 10.

2. WORK PERMITS ARE BEING DENIED TO FACTORY MANAGERS IN CASE OF TWO TIRE COMPANIES, AND TO TWO FINANCIAL DIRECTORS OF THE GE FIRMS. EACH HAS RECEIVED FROM COMMERCE MINISTRY WRITTEN NOTICE OF REFUSAL OF WORK PERMITS, EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF UNIROYAL WHICH HAS RECEIVED SHORT THREEZAMONTH EXTENSION, I. E., THROUGH MARCH 1977. AMERICAN FIRMS UNDERSTAND THAT THEY MUST SUBMIT FORMAL REPLY WITHIN 30 DAYS (LETTERS OF REFUSAL WERE DATED BETWEEN NOVEMBER 16 AND 21) OR REFUSAL BECOMES FAIL ACCOMPLI. AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES HAD HEARD THAT ITALIAN JOINT VENTTURE PIRELLI AND TOFAS(FIAT) HAVE SIMILAR PROBLEM AND THAT ITALIAN AMBASSADOR
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HAD RAISED ISSUED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO WITH PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL.

LATTER REPORTEDLY GAVE ASSURANCES THAT PROBLEM WOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF.

3. GE REPRESENTATIVES INFORM US THAT THEY INTEND TO RAISE ISSUE AT DECEMBER 5 APPOINTMENT WITH AMBASSADOR MACOMBER. THEY WILL ALSO BE SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF TWO TIRE COMPANIES. RESPS BELIEVE REFUSALS BASED LARGELY ON NEGATIVE ATTITUDE AT HIGHEST LEVELS WITHIN THE STATE PLANNING ORGANIZATION. AMONG POINTS THEY MADE WERE POTENTIAL AFFECT ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT CLIMATE OF EXCESSIVELY RESTRICTIVE GOVT POLICY ON WORK PERMITS, FACT THAT SEVERAL OF FIRMS INVOLVED EMPLOY LARGE NUMBER SO TURKISH NATIONALS IN EUROPE AND, IN THE CASE OF TIRE COMPANIES, THE LOSS OF A NUMBER OF KEY PERSONNEL TO THE NEW TURKISH TIRE FIRM LASSA WHICH MAKES IT ESSENTIAL THEY RETAIN AMERICAN OR FOREIGN FACTORY MANAGER. AS TACTICAL MEASURE, ALL FIRMS INTEND TO REQUEST OPEN-ENDED EXTENSION OF PERMITS SINCE THEY CONVINCED THAT, IT REQUEST MADE FOR ONE YEAR ONLY, ADDITIONAL RENEWALS WILL BE DENIED. HOWEVER, THEY ARE PREPARED AS A FALL BACK POSITION TO SETTLE FOR ONE-YEAR EXTENSIONS.

4. COMMENT: IN GENERAL, AMERICAN FIRMS HAVE REDUCED NUMBERS OF FOREIGN EMPLOYEED BY ABOUT HALF OVER PAST TEN YEARS. IN THE CASE OF LARGER MANUFACTURING FIRMS HERE, INCLUDING GE, GOODYEAR AND UNIROY, THE REDUCTION HAS BEEN EVEN GREATER, FROM A TOTAL OF 51 IN MID-1960'S TO 19 IN 1972; AT PRESENT THEY HAVE 11 FOREIGN EMPLOYEES, FOUR OF WHOM HAVE BEEN REFUSED WORK PERMITS. FOR FIRMS AFFECTED BY CURRENT REFUSALS, FINANCIAL DIRECTORS AND FACTORY MANAGERS CONSIDERED KEY PERSONNEL AND LOSS OF THESE POSITIONS WOULD IMPAIR ABILITY OF COMPANIES TO MAINTAIN THE MOST EFFICIENT OPERATIONS AS WELL AS TO RETAIN CONFIDENCE OF THEIR INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTER.

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